



Foggy Bottom News

Published for and by the Citizens of Foggy Bottom

NEXT MEETING

Monday, March 27 8pm

**St. Paul's Parish House
2430 K St., NW**

DON'T TEAR IT DOWN

ALAMAC CONVERSION

Management of the Alamac Apartments at 924-25th St., N.W., has announced plans to convert the building from residential to an apartment hotel. In a letter delivered February 26, the 125 tenants were informed that they would have to vacate the building within 90 days - the minimum notice within the law.

Residents of the Alamac, surprised by this sad turn of events, have formed a tenants association to represent their interests in dealings with the landlords and with city officials. Neighbors of the Alamac have expressed support for the association out of their concern over the intrusion of commercial interests into this residential community.

At issue is the conflict between a landlord's right to the use of his property and his responsibilities to his building's tenants and neighbors. At issue also is the role of the city government in these matters. In the present case, management has served eviction notices on 125 occupants, without the benefit of public hearings. There is a strong possibility the same fate could befall neighboring buildings.

Thus, the residential character of a neighborhood can be drastically changed and housing availability materially reduced without any involvement of city officials who should be required to act in the public interest in these matters.

The Alamac is controlled by a partnership composed of members of the family of Mr. Raymond Howar and is leased to Alamac, Inc., and managed by The Management Partnership, Inc., for the new venture. In a letter to tenants the former managing agent blamed rent control for this action.

Mitchell Morris
Stering Committee
Alamac Tenants Association

The Foggy Bottom Association expressed support for the Alamac tenants at its last meeting, supporting the residents in their opposition to eviction, as well as expressing support for a petition drive to prohibit future apartment hotel conversions in the District.

ST. STEPHEN'S PARISH NIGHT

St. Stephen's Church invites all residents of Foggy Bottom to an enjoyable evening of dining, entertainment and dancing on April 8th at the International Club, 1800 K Street, N.W. This event is given for the purpose of bringing our parish family together for a gala evening and we want to include all members of the community.

The price of a ticket is \$12.00. For information and tickets, call the Rectory 785-0983 between 11 and 3 Mondays thru Fridays. Or leave a note any time and someone will call you. The address is 2436 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W. Also, there are forms (with a return envelope) for ordering tickets in the back of the church. You may use these forms and leave them at the Rectory.

PLANNING FOR THE RENEWAL OF FOGGY BOTTOM

by Antoinette J. Lee

Foggy Bottom at mid-twentieth century appeared to stand on the cutting edge of two futures. One fate would lead to the rehabilitation of the many townhouses in the area. Georgetown served as a model for this type of renewal accomplished by private investment. Newcomers to Capital Hill had initiated a similar renovation process by the early 1950's. The other prospect lay in the advantages of the area's central location. Large-scale development was the most likely result of this feature.

The National Housing Act of 1949 allowed for the Redevelopment Land Agency (first organized in 1946) to receive funds for "slum clearance and redevelopment." By 1955, in response to a request by citizens groups in Foggy Bottom, the RLA had formulated urban renewal goals for the area. In contrast with the massive clearance approach which characterized urban renewal planning in the southwest quadrant of the city, the RLA determined that "only a small amount of clearance will be required in Foggy Bottom." This less drastic renewal plan would "assure private investors of the stability of the area and encourage them to make a further investment in rehabilitation." Land values would be stabilized by the protection of the residential areas from depreciating commercial, mixed, and non-conforming uses. This kind of planning and coordinated action would thus create a permanently favorable environment for a neighborhood. In order for public funds to be used for the provision of neighborhood facilities and stable land values, the National Capital Planning Commission was required to adopt boundaries for the renewal area. Two areas were tentatively mapped out by 1956: Foggy Bottom urban renewal area was bounded by H Street, 24th Street, Pennsylvania Avenue, and 27th Street. The latter renewal area encompassed the university and the neighborhood from 19th Street west to 27th, excluding the Foggy Bottom renewal area.

In the process of formulating plans for these two urban renewal areas, a structural and family survey was conducted. Once the boundaries were established and the survey completed, it was expected that designation would bring Federal mortgage insurance, RLA's eminent domain powers, and other Federal programs that could assist with the rehabilitation upgrading of the area.

Active citizen participation in these proceedings came from the Foggy Bottom Restoration Association (predecessor to the Foggy Bottom Association), founded in May of 1955. The group sought adoption of the Foggy Bottom urban renewal plan. The association, described in the *Post and Star* as a "nonsegregated group," urged adoption of the plan based on the belief that private rehabilitation efforts had progressed as far as possible without the exercise of public powers and the availability of public monies.

Threats to this hope for gradual rehabilitation were posed by commercial developers with large-scale buildings in mind. In 1955, the Potomac Plaza Corp. applied for a building permit to start the construction of the first phase of what would ultimately be a sizeable apartment building. People's Life Insurance Company was also planning a large office building. It appeared that Foggy Bottom was "literally seething with private building and rebuilding efforts" such that a long-term planning project stretched over a period of several years would kill off these enterprises.

George Washington University was included in a separate renewal area partially in response to the need to plan for the route of the Inner Loop Freeway which was charted to run along 23rd Street. RLA planners felt it necessary that the "entire surrounding area (adjacent to the Freeway) come within an integrated plan." The university itself offered a second reason for the renewal area: in order to expand without hindrance, the university "must be

aided by land use control of its surroundings." This project was further justified on the basis of the several similar redevelopment and renewal projects being planned across the country to assist with the development of "attractive campuses and appropriate surrounding neighborhoods."

While the residents' sympathies supported an urban renewal plan for the Foggy Bottom area, they were opposed to the designation of the university area. An urban renewal designation would allow the RLA to use its powers of eminent domain to assemble parcels of land, clear the land, and sell the cleared land to the university as the redeveloper. This redevelopment process would give the University free rein to its expansion efforts.

Upon closer examination, the buildings within the proposed university renewal area were in their relatively good condition. Residents urged RLA not to designate the university area, stating that the agency should concentrate its efforts on slums and blighted areas. The university plan was eventually dropped.

As for the Foggy Bottom renewal area, the private developers mounted an effective campaign to prevent its formal designation. The prices of land were increasing at a rapid rate, making the rationale of renewal plans to deal with urban disinvestment less convincing. Representatives of the large development projects urged the NCPC to keep its hands off the area. The anticipated renewal designation was further thwarted by plans for an auditorium and national cultural center (later the Kennedy Center), new street and highway networks, and a new bridge across the Potomac. Over a period of several years, the Foggy Bottom renewal area was reduced to avoid these large scale projects.

In the end, the two urban renewal plans for Foggy Bottom shrank into a 18.2 acre area which accommodated Columbia Plaza. This piece of land had previously been divided into small lots. The urban renewal

(continued on page 4)

Are YOU a Member?

The Foggy Bottom Association is a non-profit citizens' association serving the Foggy Bottom area. Please fill out and mail the membership card below with your check for \$3.00 to:

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The Editor
The Washington Post
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Dear Sir:

Too frequently we complain—too rarely we compliment—our City on provision of services. I find myself calling on the telephone to compliment the City but rarely writing it so that many many people get to see it. Now, in writing to you, I want to compliment the District of Columbia on its handling of our recent "BIG SNOW" problems. They have done one heck of a good job!!! And, at great sacrifice to the employees doing the job; and great discomfort too—they must have near frozen to death out in that cold wind. I live in the Foggy Bottom area and for the residents of that area we want to state our particular thanks.

Respectfully,

Mary E. Healy
1475 Va. Ave. NW #329

NEIGHBORS.. NOW..AND THEN

Natalie Beaulieu has returned to Foggy Bottom from a month's sojourn on the Gold Coast, Florida, where she attended art school in Melbourne, and later rendezvoused in Titusville with Joyce and Harry Wachter, checking out with them the real estate situation in Brevard and Volusia Counties. The Wachters were at 910 - 25th Street, and are now proud owners of an exciting property at Raccoon Ford, Virginia. Their daughter, Monsita Elaine, now resides in San Juan. The Wachters keep in touch with Foggy Bottom through such friends as Dorothy and Fred Blumenthal, and Dorothy Cascioni. Joyce and Harry are so delighted with their real estate investment in Titusville, they are investigating real estate potentials in other areas of the Gold Coast. They send their best to all their friends in The Bottom.

FOGGY BOTTOM FARMER



APRIL MOON
New 1st 1/4 Full Last 1/4
7th 15th 22nd 29th

Planting and seeding during the "full of the moon" is no "old wives" tale; science gives credence to the improved growth that follows. Two weeks later during the new moon there is the literal pulling of the emerging seedlings up to the light by the combined gravitational pull of the sun and the moon when they are lined up on the same side of the earth.

This is the same combined pull of the sun and moon that draws the ocean waters to their highest spring tides.

So, plant during the full of the moon and two weeks later during the new moon, when heat and moisture has prepared your seed, watch it stretch up to the silver sliver of moon in the evening sky. The earth, the moon, the sun and their combined gravitational forces, sun's rays, their heat and earth's moisture are all a part of the miracle of life.

Accomplished gardeners respect basics. Three S's to successful gardening basics relate to sanitation, soil and sustenance. Sanitation should come first with the cleanup and composting of the remains of last year's plants; they could otherwise harbor this year's diseases. Soil comes second; it must have the capacity to hold both water and air with equal facility. Heavy (clay) soils tend to exclude both; lighten them by adding gravelly sand. Soils of excessive sand soon become dry; correct this by adding peatmoss for its sponge-like water-retention characteristic. For the balcony gardener, a manufactured soil composed of equal parts of perlite (light weight), peatmoss and sandy loam will provide a good growing medium without excess weight.

The third basic, sustenance, can be provided in many forms and many modes of application. Fertilizer is generally most effective during the season of most rapid growth, for most common plants, during the month that the American Indians named the "Moon of Fatness"—June. By Memorial Day your seedlings should have become well established; that makes June the time of very effective feeding. For the established plants, time your feeding to follow the emerging new growth. For most plants, including roses, apply a complete fertilizer such as 5-10-5 at the approximate rate of two to three pounds per 100 square feet of planting bed. Specialized fertilizers (water-soluble, pelleted time-release, fertilizer spikes, bonemeal) have specialized uses. The water-soluble fertilizers may be used to achieve rapid food assimilation through foliar feeding to supplement the ground feeding of sickly or slow-growing plants. The pelleted time-release fertilizers can sustain a plant the "live-long" year; the same is true of fertilizer spikes which can be pounded into the soil at the periphery of the branches of your favorite tree. Bonemeal is for the early spring top-dressing of beds of spring bulbs.

There is a fourth basic—sunlight; it has no substitute when growing vegetables, fruit and aquatics. However, a light "dappling" of shade will keep the bright colors of the Azalea from the bleaching effect of sustained bright sun. One Nurseryman tells that the lack of sun (shade) can sometimes be overcome by more than normal fertilizing—(a doubling of the normal rate or combining conventional fertilizing with foliar fertilizing and time-release)—worth trying.

The "for your balcony" portable shade tree promised for this month—has been postponed until next.

William S. Lattin

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Foggy Bottom News

The Foggy Bottom News is a publication of the Foggy Bottom Association. All editorial and other assistance is contributed on a volunteer basis by residents of the area.

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seen

around

the Bottom

Mary Healy



SEEING IS BELIEVING! Several Foggybottomites reported seeing my goose down by the river side. One suggested I call the Zoo to see if one of theirs had taken a sabbatical. The Zoo was very familiar with our goose (it wasn't theirs). They say that this is its second year on the parkway; that it is a domestic "Chinese type" goose (whatever that is); that it really only weighs 20 lbs (feathers are deceiving); and that it eats everything and anything. They summed up our discussion by saying ... "The best way to describe it is that you have a loose goose." So there—who says you can't ever get any information out of a government establishment!!!!

Nesting mourning doves are back again in the tulip tree at the PP. Tom Folk encouraged them a few weeks ago by fixing up a nest and they have been busy ever since.

After the wild wind and snow a few weeks ago, did you happen to see the lovely rainbow puddles in the streets—very pretty reds, blues, and greens. I haven't seen those for ages; wonder if the salted streets had anything to do with it. And, did you see the guy on the tiny bike peddling his heart out in the blinding snow?

And during that same snow did you see that bright red sun shining over the Watergate Apts? A real fireball. I remember as a kid when the sun shone when it rained, or when it rained on one side of the street and not the other, "they" would say "the devil was beating his wife." Wonder what was happening when it snowed and the sun insisted on doing its thing?

Another phenomenon —a young man starting to walk through the Juarez tulip bed and actually stopping and walking completely around the park to the pavements. OH, FOR MANY PEOPLE IN OUR AREA LIKE HIM!!!

The City finally cut down that ugly dead hedge at the Va. Ave. walkway over the Whitehurst Freeway. Now if we can just get them to do something about the dying azelea beds. Why don't some of you join me in trying to exert our influence? We need the relief of those colorful little plot parks—but we need them alive, healthy and full. Write or call.

While walking the neighborhood the other day I almost got knocked down at the exit from the PMI garage at the Columbia Plaza on Va. Ave. Some jerk came barreling out the exit, busily looking at the oncoming traffic from his left (west) and didn't even know I was in the crosswalk. Be careful; it is a bad spot. I think that this is one of the cross walks we've asked DC Highways to repaint.

Spring's coming; look around our neighborhood. Report broken trash cans, signs knocked askew, litter, dirty trashy vacant lots, and all that type thing negligent uncaring people seem to thrive on during the winter. Rember that if you can't get anyone to answer on the number you call, the Mayor's Complaint Center is on #393-3333. If no one comes to fix things, try doing some of the clean-up or fix-up yourself as your good neighborhood deed. EVERYBODY TAKE A LOOK AT THE SHRUBBERY AT YOUR RESIDENCE; IF IT IS PROTRUDING OVER THE PROPERTY LINE AND INTERFERING WITH NORMAL WALK PATTERNS PLEASE, PLEASE CUT IT BACK. AND IF YOU CUT IT DOWN SOME IT WILL IMPROVE THE SECURITY IN OUR AREAZ. Those high hedges are a perfect hiding place for people up to no good. 25th Street, between Eye and K, really needs attention!

I haven't been in the new Federal Home Loan Bank Board headquarters at 17th and G yet, but in riding by it the interior court looks lovely and exciting. It's not in our area but it is certainly ours to enjoy - the ice skaters looked like they were in 7th Heaven.

I've been busy getting ready to "really" do my taxes—have been wading thru piles of little pieces of paper, big pieces, pamphlets, books, etc. What mess. This made me think of a recent Post article by Louise Cook on KEEPING RECORDS - KNOW WHEN TO THROW THEM OUT. The Federal Consumer Information Center states that the booklet "KEEPING RECORDS, WHAT TO DISCARD" is one of the agency's most popular (according to the article, that is). It is available—for free - from the Center: Dept. 625E Pueblo, Colorado 81009.

We've got a year to go to get our quieter trash trucks. The EPA's noise limit on those monsters goes into effect in Jan. 79. Now if we could just stop all the siren whistle blowing of the police escort motorcades everytime a visiting dignitary comes whizzing thru our area, it would be helpful. Police sirens and fire and hospital ambulance noise elimination will have to wait another 20 years, I guess, but the others we can do without now.

Do you ever wonder why people notice the things they do? I have a thing for clean, shiny shoes—particularly men's. Bugs me no end to see a man's shoes look like they haven't been shined since they were purchased. A shiny example of how men's shoes should look, in my opinion, is those sported by Andy Nilles, formerly one of our town house residents and presently a Potomac Plaza resident. Andy's shoes just sparkle. Never thought anyone noticed, eh Andy?

Andy notices odd things too. From his 9th floor view at the double P he says the tulip bed and lawn on the north Juarez Park area look like a picture of Snoopy's head. He's right; I looked after he told me about it and even from my 3rd floor window I can see it.

The promised "traffic fix-it report" is listed here briefly. Anyone wanting more detailed info can come to the March 27 FBA Meeting and I'll be glad to fill you in. Hopefully we'll get 4-way stop signs on 24th St. at G and at H; at NH and Eye and at 25th and Eye. We'll get a merging sign on the SW side of Washington Circle. Worn and faded traffic signs will be replaced. Cross walks on Va. Ave. and adjacent to the Juarez Circle area will be cross hatched to make car drivers more aware of the crosswalk (particularly when you are in it). The walk area at 25th and H (west side) will be widened to slow cars down coming into that area. No Parking Hatched Ls will be put at some of the worse curb to curb parking areas. The walk signal at Va. and NH Aves (close to McLachlen Bank going west) will be lengthened and the vehicle light on Va. at NH will remain red longer to allow pedestrians to cross more safely.

Plans call for upgrading our traffic signal lights which will permit addition of some signals to prohibit U Turns, turns into One-way streets, etc. etc. and maybe—just maybe—might give a break to the pedestrian in crossing Va Ave. Flashing Don't Walk signals on Va Ave. will be installed to indicate that one should continue walking to the other side once you've started across on a walk light. A study will be made to determine the need for a traffic light cross walk on Va. Ave.—close to Howard Johnson's. All of this will take a little while; be patient.

Incidentally the HT Inspector says it is definitely against the traffic regs for any parking lot attendant to block the sidewalk at the entrance or exit to his lot, or to park cars in the street while he is trying to find a hole to put them in. Call the Police says he-to stop this hazardous practice. On our walk around the area the Inspector witnessed a flagrant violation of this practice. He spoke to the Lot operator and received a lot of guff in reply; that's when he advised what he would do if he lived in this neighborhood.

ELLIE BECKER SUCCEEDED IN GETTING A PROMISE TO INSTALL A SET OF STEPS AT 25TH AND VA. (NW SIDE) TO TAKE THE PLACE OF THE MUD HILL THAT MANY HAVE BEEN USING FOR SO LONG, AND TO HAVE THE WATER PUDDLE PROBLEM FIXED ON THE PATHWAY FROM 26TH AND EYE TO 25TH AND VA. GOOD WORK, ELLIE; WATCH FOR THE CEMENTERS SO YOU CAN SCRATCH YOUR NAME IN THE TOP STEP; YOU DESERVE IT; THAT WAS A LONG HARD BATTLE.

We are still working on having a solid pathway put on the park on the south side of Va. between Peoples Life and Columbia Plaza. It is a muddy mess but it is a natural short cut and I'm afraid we will never get people to use

the pavement so maybe we can get pavement there. I'm having some trouble convincing the City Fathers of this but I haven't given up yet. Enough traffic; if you want more you know where to find me on the 27th.

THANKS EVERYBODY FOR TURNING OUT FOR THE FIRE MEETING YOU DID US PROUD. A COUPLE KEY THINGS FROM THE MEETING ARE LISTED HERE: SMOKE DETECTORS PROBABLY CAN SAVE ABOUT 95% OF THE DEATHS BY FIRE AND SMOKE INHALATION; FOR A MORE QUICK RESPONSE TO FIRE REPORTS CALL HO 2-1616—IT IS A DIRECT LINE (911 GOES THRU A COMMUNICATION CENTER); FIRE DRILLS ARE A GOOD THING BUT YOU MUST DEVICE A SYSTEM FOR HANDLING BEFORE YOU DRILL OR YOU WILL HAVE CHAOS; ALWAYS CALL THE FIRE DEPT FIRST BEFORE YOU TRY TO PUT OUT A FIRE (IF YOU THINK YOU CAN PUT IT OUT) BUT THE BEST RULE IS TO LET THE FIRE DEPT. PUT IT OUT. IN AN APT. BLDG. FIRE, IF THERE IS NO HEAT ON YOUR CORRIDOR DOOR AND NO SMOKE IN YOUR APT. THE SAFEST BET IS

TO STAY IN YOUR APT. UNTIL SOMEONE SOUNDS THE ALL CLEAR; IF THERE IS SMOKE IN YOUR APT. GO TO AN OUTSIDE WINDOW, CRACK IT OPEN FOR AIR, HANG A PIECE OF WHITE CLOTH OUT THE WINDOW TO SIGNAL YOU'RE IN THERE, AND GET DOWN LOW ON THE FLOOR—AND STAY THERE—THE AIR WILL BE BETTER THERE.

Last month we gave you some details on our new neighbor coming up—St. Mary's Court. Next month we'll tell you something about the general contractor, Jim Hammond, who is making it all happen.

Our sympathy goes to Jackie Cooper (one of our contributing FBA artists) who recently lost her father.

See you March 27 - DON'T TEAR IT DOWN should be very interesting and it certainly is most important to our area.

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ANC Business Meeting Tuesday, April 4th St. Paul's Church

All Business meetings begin at 8 p.m.



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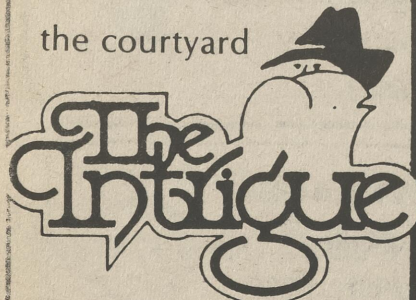
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ANC NEWS

Housing and zoning issues were again the focus of the Foggy Bottom and West End Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) during the first part of 1978. The Alamac Apartments at 924 25th Street was the latest residential apartment house to be turned into a commercial hotel. The ANC is investigating ways to amend the zoning regulations to encourage the retention of residential buildings in our neighborhood.

Add the Alamac Apartments to the two most recent losses of apartment buildings in the area and we do have a problem. The residents of the Lombardy Apartments on the 2000 block of Eye Street are being evicted to make way for a new hotel and the apartment building at 2109 F Street was purchased by the George Washington University to be used for student housing as present tenants move out. While some buildings are being converted into hotels or student housing, a number of buildings have been demolished by GWU in the last few months. Those buildings are 2135 F St., 604 21st St., 2140-42-46 Eye St., and the group of attractive rowhouses on the south side of Washington Circle.

Just a reminder, the new Rent Control Law goes into effect in March so expect some increases

The ANC did score a victory in defeating a proposal for a commercial development at 22nd and K Streets, N.W. In denying the developer's request, the Zoning Commission stressed that the area should remain residential. At a meeting of the Board of Zoning Adjustments, Oliver Carr's request to increase the number of parking places at the new Westbridge development was granted with the provision that the places be of regulation size, thus giving him fewer spaces than requested.

ANC Commissioners testified at Zoning Commission hearings in January and February regarding the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation proposals and the NCPC foreign mission element proposal concerning the location of chanceries and international agencies in residential areas like ours.

In addition to the Standing Committee on the Neighborhood Plan, two new committees, the standing Committee on Housing and the Standing Committee on Transportation, were formed. Persons interested in serving on any of these committees are welcome to join. Just call the ANC office to get additional information.

Karen Gordon has joined the ANC as Administrative Assistant. She is in the office at 2424 K Street, N.W. from 9:00 to 5:00 on Mondays and Thursdays. The phone number is 965-2600.

Renewal

(continued from page 1)

designation allowed for all land in this small project area to be assembled, a feat that private interests had been unable to achieve. A unified development was therefore made possible. Columbia Plaza was conceived as a "packaged living" complex, primarily for residential use, but with a mix of shops and office facilities sufficient to produce a round-the-clock population.

The homeowners who bought townhouses in Foggy Bottom for rehabilitation found themselves in the unhappy position of being followed by a stream of corporate developers ready to cash in on the central location of the area and the empty lots left by the removal of the gas tanks and local industries. In 1956, a resident noted the lack of a plan for orderly development of the area,

a situation that would result in the predominance of the commercializing influence. This unchecked growth would reestablish "another kind of blight just as the area was taking a new lease on life." The Foggy Bottom we know today represents a compromise between the hopes of the rehabilitation pioneers and those of the big commercial interests.

(This article, prepared from newspaper accounts and annual reports on deposit with the D.C. Office of Housing and Community Development, is the last in the series of history articles that was initiated in March of 1977. Future articles of historical interest will appear in the *Foggy Bottom News* on an occasional basis.)

AN INNOVATION AT ADAM'S RIB

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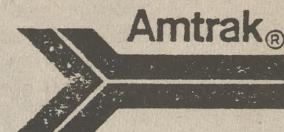
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